Community Connectedness & Community Engagement

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Definition of Community Engagement

- **Community engagement** refers to the process by which community benefit organizations and individuals build ongoing, permanent relationships for the purpose of applying a **collective vision** for the benefit of a community.

The CDC states the goals of community engagement are to build trust, enlist new resources and allies, create better communication and improve overall health outcomes as successful projects evolve into lasting collaborations.

Source - Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (June 2011). *Principles of community engagement. Second edition.* http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/communityengagement/pdf/PCE_Report_508_FINAL.pdf

Same old – Same old

"Good information draws upon our collective wisdom".

– How many experience this?

– Community engagement involving the same ten people in the community.

– This is problematic because these ten people do not necessarily represent the community as a whole nor do these ten people represent a diverse set of viewpoints.

– Pros and Cons

Which came first

- The chicken or the egg?

- Community Connectedness or Community Engagement?

It starts with Connectedness.....

- Community Connectedness leads to Community Engagement

- It is all about relationships

- Unless you have relationships it is hard to bring people to the table to inform, consult, and involve

- Unless you take the time to build the relationships will not be able to create a vision for your community and make a change

Promoting Connectedness

- Models respectful behavior
- Communicates clear expectations
- Offers praise
- Encourages others
- A willingness to listen
- Talks openly
- Allows for reflective thinking
- Problem solves and decision making
- Creates a respectful atmosphere

- Fair
- Kind
- Practices empathy
- Displays self-control
- Allows differing viewpoints
- Acknowledges differences-cultural competency
- Shows an interest
- Says "Hello" to everyone

*Sometimes easier to make a list than to practice it in the community

Why "connectedness" matters in your community......

- Want people in your community to feel good about themselves

- Promotes motivation

- Promotes completing tasks and increase participation levels

- Shifts attitudes and community norms

- Increases attendance

- Increases the support for policy change

- Get more involved in making decisions

- Develops friendships- promotes teamwork

- Moves from Passive to active leadership

- Provides Ownership over outcomes

Increasing Level of Public Impact/Participation
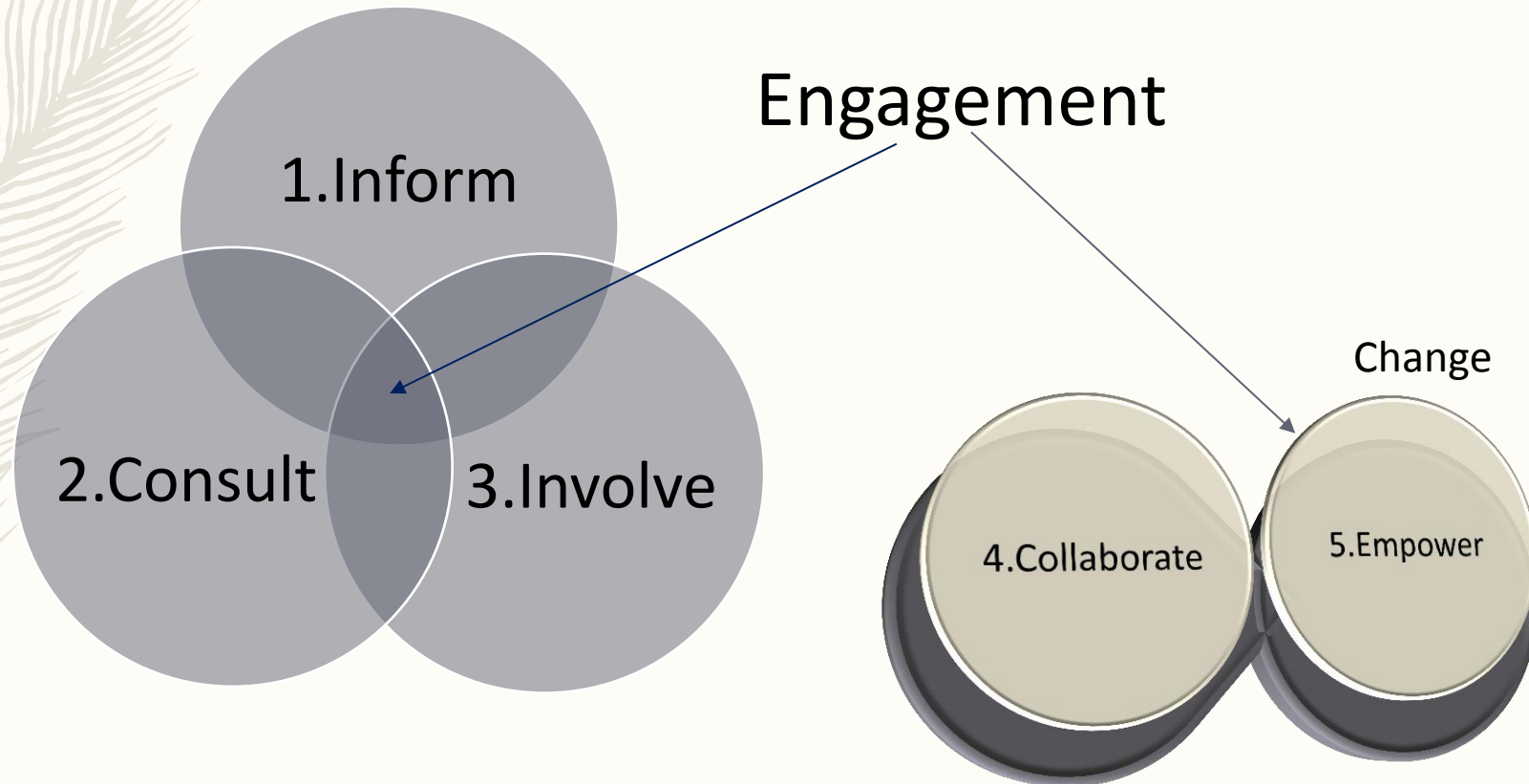
Engagement

1.Inform

2.Consult

3.Involve

Change

4.Collaborate

5.Empower

5 Different Increasing Impact Levels

– **Inform** - Informing is passive and involves a one-way flow of information;

– **Consult** - Consulting is reactive. Information is shared and stakeholders are asked to react to it;

– **Involve** - Involving allows the community to influence priorities. You present the problem and the community comes up with solutions to fix it;

– **Collaborate** - Collaborating means that the community is a partner from the beginning. Together you decide upon the key issues, and how best to tackle them;

– **Empower**- Empowering means leadership comes from the community while your organization and others support them.

Inform

- To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

- Examples: Media

Consult

– To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions

– Examples: Focus Groups, Surveys, Public Meetings

Involve

– To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns are consistently understood and considered

– Examples: Workshops, Educational Events,

Collaborate

– To partner with the public on each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and identification of the preferred solution

– Examples: Consensus Building, participatory decision-making, advisory committees

– At this conference will have a the opportunity to inform, consult, involve and finally collaborate - This is us – here – and now!

Empower

– To place final decisions in the hands of the public

– Examples: ballot issues

Self Reflection-
What do we need to work on?

– Where am I on the continuum of Community Connectedness?

– Where am I on the continuum of Community Engagement?

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– Where is my prevention coalition and/or DUI Task Force on the continuum of Community Connectedness? Who is missing?

– Which level of Engagement does my prevention coalition and/or DUI Task Force currently use the most? Are we increasing our level of impact?